Animal diseases: foot-and-mouth disease (repeal. Directive 85/511/EEC and Decisions 89/531/EEC and 91/665/EEC; amend. Directive 92/46/EEC)

2002/0299(CNS) - 08/04/2003

The Council took note of the important progress made at technical level on the proposal for a Council Directive on Community measures for the control of foot-and-mouth disease and held an exchange of views on some key issues of this dossier. The Council instructs the Committee of Permanent Representatives to continue actively to work in the light of the current deliberation with a view to reach a decision on the dossier once the Opinion of the European Parliament will have been given. Two issues were addressed at the Council: - several delegations expressed their concerns concerning the recognition by third countries of the new approach of the proposal for a Directive, which emphasises the role of emergency vaccination and the principle of regionalisation; for some delegations, a new strategy regarding vaccination as suggested by the proposal should first be accepted by the main trade partners outside the European Union, before being adopted. For other delegations, negotiations with third countries should not impeed the progress of discussions in the Council on the proposal. Commissioner BYRNE indicated that, although regionalisation had been agreed at international level by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), his Institution could not guarantee the acceptance by all third countries of regionalisation and other control measures, including emergency vaccination. - delegations also raised the issue of the financial consequences, both direct like the use of preventive vaccination on animals, and indirect, like the marketing of products derived from vaccinated animals. With regard to this issue, some delegations asked for a new definition of tasks for the Veterinary Fund created by Council Decision 90/424/EEC which may entail part of the costs derived from the vaccination procedure, while others emphasised the need to limit the scope of Community expenditures to current tasks but accepted that indirect costs could be covered by market support measures; Commissioner BYRNE stressed that there was no need to review Council Decision 90/424/EEC on expenditure in the veterinary field.